



2003 Annual Report



New Fire Station #3

***The Mission of the Rochester Fire Department
is to work within the community to provide the highest level
of protection for life, property, and economic stability.***

FIRE CHIEF OFFICERS

Dave Kapler, Fire Chief

Dan Slavin, Deputy Fire Chief, Training/Planning

Lyle Felsch, Deputy Fire Chief, Fire Prevention Bureau

Chuck Hermann, Assistant Fire Chief, Shift #1

Rick Lovett, Assistant Fire Chief, Shift #2

Dan Dinneen, Assistant Fire Chief, Shift #3

Jeff Leland, Administrative Services Manager

----Fire Administration #507-285-8072----

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DAVID A. KAPLER
Fire Chief

April 2004

Dear City Council and Citizens,

I am pleased to present the 2003 Rochester Fire Department Annual Report. Several years ago it was necessary to discontinue the Annual Report due to limited human and fiscal resources. This year, we are once again reviving the Annual Report in a condensed, mostly automated format. We recognize the importance of communicating our business objectives and accomplishments and recording important historical data.

You will notice that the organizational chart is non-traditional. It is designed to depict our organizational focus, the customer. Serving citizens is at the center of all Fire Department activity. Firefighters are the closest to our customers and interact with them face to face everyday. The ovals around the outer ring represent many of the systems necessary to support, train, equip and mobilize our firefighters to serve our customers in a highly efficient, effective and professional way.

It is not by coincidence that "safety" is at the top of the chart. Our highest value and chief objective is to provide a safe work environment for our employees. This is not always easy, considering the environment in which we work. Safety requires constant assessment and improvement in our practices, training and equipment. However, as the community's safety experts and the people called upon to stabilize unsafe situations, if we do not keep our people safe, we can not continue to deliver those services to our citizens.

The year 2003 posed significant financial constraints for all city departments. It was still a year of progress and achievement for the Rochester Fire Department. Some of these achievements included:

- Reconstruction of Fire Station #3
- Development of the first RFD Business Plan
- Development of a Strategic Resource Plan
- Receipt of state and federal Homeland Security and Fire Act Grants

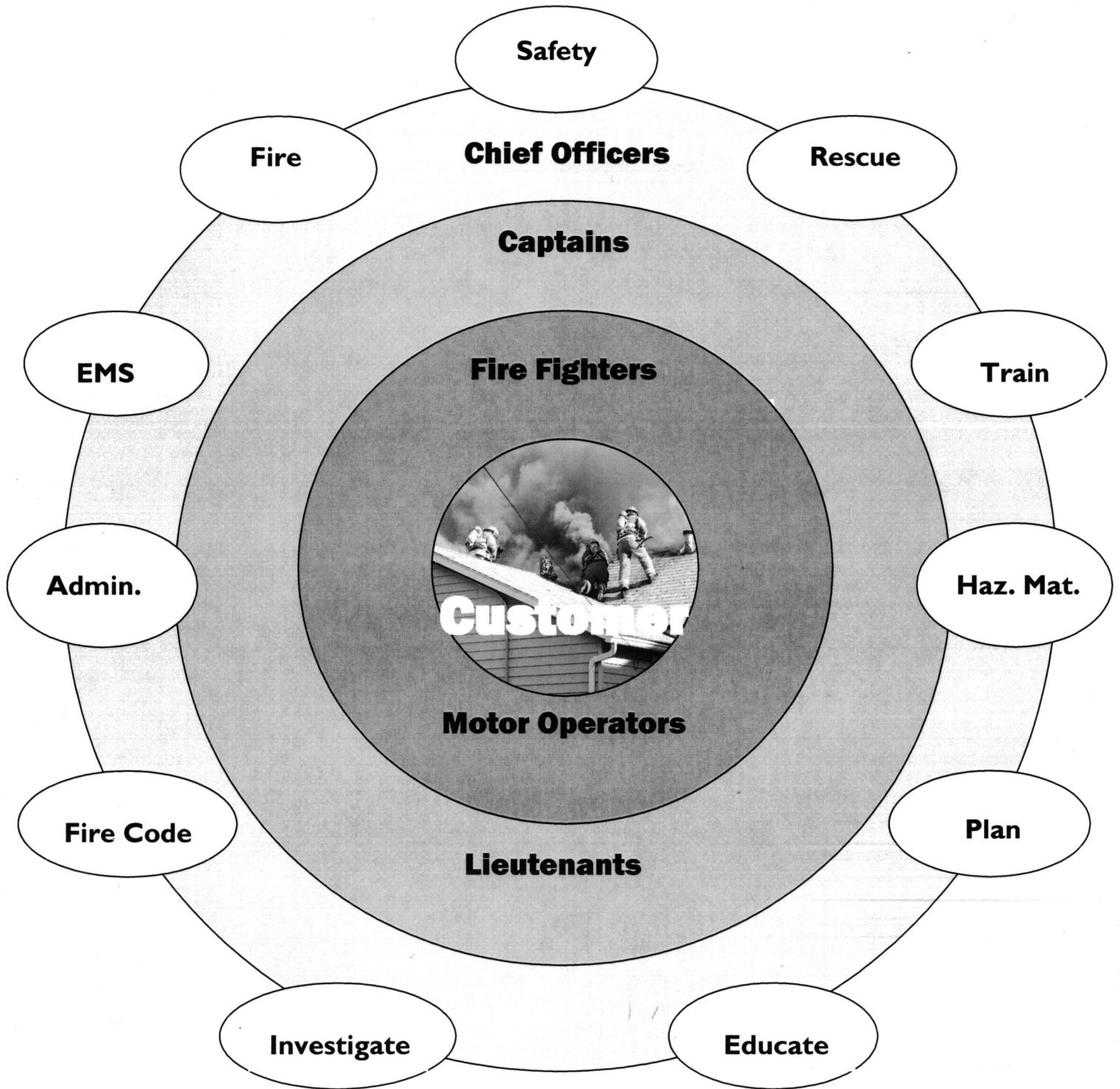
Please feel free to contact me or my staff with any questions you may have regarding Fire Department activity and services.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Kapler
Fire Chief

ROCHESTER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Organizational Chart



2003 Benchmark Achievements

Reconstruction of Fire Station #3, 2nd Ave SW

Old Fire Station #3 was built in the 1950's. It was relocated in 2003 due to its age, highway reconstruction, and growing service area. The new station is the first to be built using a new prototype design. The new station is state-of-the-art in terms of functional design, durability, and cost of operation. It is also an attractive addition to the neighborhood.

Development of the First RFD Business Plan

Today's constituents are better informed than at any time in history. Citizens demand accountability for financial and human resources. To ensure the RFD is focused, efficient, and effective with its resources, the RFD developed its first written business plan using the Balanced Scorecard for Government and Nonprofit Agencies model. The Balanced Scorecard requires development of performance measures in four areas of government business; Customer perspective, Financial, Internal Business Process, and Learning and Growth. The RFD is happy to share or discuss the Business Plan with interested individuals.

Development of a Strategic Resource Plan

In 2002, the RFD began analyzing future resource needs. A committee composed of representatives from the Fire Department, City Administration, Planning Department, IS Department, Medical Director, Chamber of Commerce, RAEDI, and citizens at large was assembled to complete the task. The resulting plan was completed in early 2003. However, due to State funding issues, the Plan was put on hold until the City regained its financial footing. The plan is being updated for 2004 and will be forwarded to City Administration and the City Council in 2004.

Receipt of State and Federal Homeland Security and Fire Act Grants

The Fire Department has and continues to receive Homeland Security funding for equipment and training. In 2003 our Department partnered with the Police Department and Olmsted County Sheriffs Department and received \$97,296 for equipment and training. Planning is in place for the Police and Fire Departments to receive an additional two million dollars in 2004 from Homeland Security.

The majority of funding and implementation of a FIRE Act Grant for radio communications was also completed in 2003. This \$128,000 project will significantly improve our radio communications capabilities.

Summary of Department Activities

The Rochester Fire Department is a full time department protecting the City of Rochester and four (4) surrounding townships including Rochester, Cascade, Marion and Haverhill. A growing community with a population of 91,000 in 45 sq. miles, Rochester is the third largest city in Minnesota after Minneapolis and Saint Paul. It is a regional city, the home of the Mayo Clinic Medical Center, three hospitals, a 3.1 million sq. ft. IBM manufacturing plant and is served by an international airport.

The Rochester Fire Department provides fire protection for the City of Rochester with an authorized strength of 93 fire suppression personnel which includes three chief officers on three shifts from four fire stations located as shown on the city map on the preceding page. Fire Headquarters is located in City Hall and houses the Fire Chief, Deputy Chiefs (2), Administrative Services Manager (1), Training Captain (1) and the Fire Prevention Bureau (4). Additional support staff includes two (2) clerical positions and a mechanic.



OPERATIONS

The Department operates four fire engines, one at each station, and two aerial trucks responding from Station One and Station Four. Additional apparatus and equipment includes two reserve engines, two tankers, two light rescues, two grass fire vehicles, a haz-mat vehicle, two boats and a rehabilitation trailer. The City of Rochester currently has an ISO fire rating of 3.

Hazardous Materials

The Rochester Fire Department is under contract with the State of Minnesota to provide a Regional Chemical Assessment Team (CAT) for Southeast Minnesota. All fire fighters are trained in hazardous material assessment to the Technician level and all Captains to the Specialist level. The CAT is dispatched by the State Duty Officer to respond with four fire fighters in a Hazardous Material Response vehicle and trailer to assist the requesting fire department in identification and assessment of nature and extent of a chemical release incident within the southeast region. Actual hazardous material incident mitigation is done by the State Emergency Response Team (ERT) located in Saint Paul.



Medical

Rochester Fire Department responds to all medical incidents as first responders in conjunction with Gold Cross Ambulance. All fire fighters are Nationally Registered Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) with automatic defibrillators carried on each first line engine as well as in police cars.



Rescue/Extrication

Department personnel are also trained and equipped to respond to a variety of rescue calls including vehicle extrication, high angle rope rescue, confined space, water and ice rescue situations. Three major highways, industrial complexes, waterways, and recreational areas as well as the Zumbro River with low-head dams, make rescue capabilities an important fire department service for the City of Rochester.



TRAINING

Fire fighters receive more than 280 hours of training each year to maintain various proficiencies and certifications required to meet the needs of the Rochester community. The Training Division is staffed by a Deputy Chief and a Training Captain who work to coordinate mandated training on shift as well as schedule outside training classes and course work. The rapid change in modern technology requires constant change and improvements in the fire service.



Recruit Training

New fire fighters must receive training in emergency medical services, rescue and hazardous materials as well as fire fighting techniques. The Training Division takes recruits and molds them into fire fighters that have all of the skills necessary to enter extremely dangerous situations in a competent and safe manner.

Evolution Training

The Training Division has adopted a didactic training style that incorporates all pertinent evolutions into appropriate training objectives. One of the goals is to find and develop personnel that can demonstrate the ability to think through a process and which will lead to the desired outcome.

Leadership Training

Another goal of the Rochester Fire Department is to continually work to improve the leadership skills of its members. The Training Division is responsible to monitor skill levels and provide a program of simulations and Company Officer Training that will prepare fire fighters to become tomorrow's leaders and chief officers.

FIRE PREVENTION

The Fire Prevention Bureau provides fire investigation, code enforcement, and public fire safety education services to the Rochester community. The Bureau employs a Fire Protection Engineer to review fire protection equipment installation plans and two Lieutenant/Inspectors to conduct on-site inspections of new and existing buildings. Public fire safety education is accomplished through a variety of specific programs and is a department-wide function. Fire sprinklers are actively promoted along with smoke detectors for all new construction and residential developments, recognizing sprinklers as the most cost effective method of fire control and life safety measures available today.

Fire Investigation

One of the initiatives of the Rochester Fire Department is to determine the cause and origin of every fire incident within our jurisdiction. To that end, Fire Prevention Bureau investigators provide support for Operations staff in determining cause and origin it when not readily apparent. The cause and origin data is used for our public education program and public information to reduce those causes.

Public Education

Since 1996, the Rochester Fire Department has operated a mobile Fire Safety House that has been used extensively in the 26 elementary schools to carry the fire safety messages to more than 5,000 students each year. The Bureau also conducts a juvenile fire-setter intervention program designed to identify problems early and work with the parents, counselors and law enforcement to redirect, educate and counsel young offenders.



Fire Code Enforcement

Rochester has been a leader in the promotion of fire sprinklers since adoption of the special sprinkler provisions for the City of Rochester in 1977. The Fire Protection Engineer on staff reviews all commercial new construction plans, new fire protection equipment and residential development projects. More than 600 on-site fire inspections of both new and existing businesses are done annually. Fire Permits are required for high hazard occupancies.



Staffing Level

Fire Chief	1	Lieutenant	2	Admin. Service Mgr.	1
Deputy Chief	2	Motor Operator	21	Fire Protection Eng.	1
Asst. Chief	3	Fire Fighter	51	Pre-Plan Specialist	1
Captain	19	Mechanic	1	Clerical Staff	2

Appointments

Chuck Solseth	August 21, 2003	Captain (temp)
Brennan Kelly	January 8, 2004	Captain
David Fitzgerald	January 1, 2003	Fire Fighter
Michael Strom	January 1, 2003	Fire Fighter

Retirements

Elmer Labrash	April 15, 2003	35 Years of Service
Robert Schloegel	May 19, 2003	18 Years of Service
Dennis O'Neill	September 29, 2003	27 Years of Service

Fire Fighter Memorial



On December 24, 2003, the members of the Rochester Fire Department dedicated a Fire Fighter memorial honoring Rochester fire fighters that died in the line of duty. Those that have answered their last alarm are:

Captain	Peter S. Mackey	July 23, 1942
Fire Fighter	Stanley J. O'Brien	December 24, 1953
Motor Operator	Ambrose J. Riley	December 24, 1953
Motor Operator	Otis D. Ondler	January 23, 1976

The date of the dedication was chosen because it was 50 years to the day that two fire fighters drowned attempting to rescue a 12 year old boy who fell through the ice in Silver Lake. The memorial is a result of fund raising efforts by the Rochester Fire Relief Association assisted by IAFF Fire Fighters Local 520 and Fire Chiefs Local 3908, organized by Captain Peter Slavin. Captain Eric Kerska headed up the memorial and dedication committee.

The dedication ceremony was attended by family members of the deceased and current fire fighters as well as local dignitaries, Mayor Ardell Brede, State Senator David Senjem, State Representative Carla Johnson and US Representative Gil Gutknecht.

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ROCHESTER FIRE DEPARTMENT **2003 Statistical Summary**

Community Protected

Land Area (sq. miles)	144.0
City	47.8
Rural	96.2
Population	105,164
City	91,264
Rural	13,900
Budget	\$9,624,135
Per Capita	\$ 91.50
Fire Stations	4
Personnel	104
Civilian	5
Fire fighters	99
FF per 1000	1.22

Incidents

Type	City	Rural	Total
Fires	202	82	284
EMS	3069	67	3136
Haz/Mat.	111	22	133
Rescue	41	11	52
False Calls	1005	34	1039
Misc./Other	1001	3	1004
Total	5429	219	5648

Fires

Structural	115	14	129
Vehicle	50	10	60
Grass/Other	37	58	95
Total	202	82	284

Commercial Fires

City	37
Rural	6
Total	43

Residential Fires

City	77
Rural	9
Total	86

Fire Loss

City	\$1,157,771
Per Capita	\$ 12.68
Average (Structure/Vehicle)	\$ 7,016

Rural	\$ 666,640
Per Capita	\$ 47.96
Average (Structure/Vehicle)	\$ 27,776

Total	\$ 1,824,411
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Deaths & Injuries

	City	Rural
Deaths		
Fire fighter	0	0
Civilian	0	0
Injuries		
Fire fighter	3	0
Civilian	0	0

Commercial Fires

City	\$ 477,640
Rural	\$ 34,500
Total	\$ 512,140

Residential Fires

City	\$ 709,431
Rural	\$ 603,200
Total	\$ 1,312,631

Fire Cause

Accidental (43.6%)	124
Cooking (12.7%)	36
Smoking Material (7.7%)	22
Unattended (5.9%)	17
Electrical (4.9%)	14
Heating Equip. (1.8%)	5
Other (10.6%)	30
Undetermined (30.6%)	87
Suspicious (16.5%)	47
Arson (9.2%)	26
Total	284

Fire Investigations

Arrests	8
Juvenile	4
Juvenile Fire Setter Counsels	16

